

“Dementia deserves better – Make dementia a priority in the 21st Century”

**Dementia Awareness Week conference. 4 June 2007
Glasgow Royal Concert Hall**

AGENDA FOR THE NEW SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

Chris McGregor with SDWG members

C McG: We believe dementia does deserve better. **The figures we're hearing today are that there are somewhere between 58,000 and 65,000 people with dementia in Scotland today and that by the year 2031 there will be a 75% increase - something like 114,000.**

If we're not doing well enough now with 58,000 **plus** people with dementia in Scotland, how will we cope with the needs of **114,000** in 25 years time?

We owe it to the present generation and to future generations to invest now

The Dementia manifesto has been received very well, but the appeal for additional expenditure of £15million now is just a start

J McK: What members of the Scottish Dementia Working Group see as a major priority is more emphasis on early diagnosis

We have experienced the dark days of knowing something was wrong with us, but not having a diagnosis, or being treated for depression

The sooner people know their diagnosis the sooner they can face up to it

It is important for people to make decisions while they still have the capacity

NMcA: We all know from our own experience how important it is to have good support from the point of diagnosis This is often not available, especially in rural areas

Counselling can help and having the opportunity to meet other people with dementia can provide a lifeline

We want to see better social support available from the point of diagnosis

CMcG: Some good work has been done on integrated care pathways. ICPs should be what they say - comprehensive and integrated. Alzheimer Scotland would like to see more commitment to social care in the document now out for consultation. Dementia is about much more than health – local authorities must be held to account too

The new Scottish Executive must commit to making integrated care pathways a reality

The vast majority of people with dementia are over 65, and many of them are in the later stages of the condition

We need to build services which treat them with respect and do not leave them vulnerable

There must be a balance between protection and risk-taking

EMcL: It makes economic sense to enable people to live at home for as long as possible

This is what people want, and more support must be provided to make sure it happens

Carers bear a heavy burden. They need much more access to respite care and short

breaks

Home care and day care services must also be increased

More investment in these services in future will ensure that demand for costly residential care does not go through the roof

CMcG: So far we have highlighted early diagnosis, more support from the point of diagnosis, and effective pathways of care through all stages of dementia including the final stage (Refer to Bobby's story)

Services to support carers, including respite and short breaks, must be strengthened

Home care and day care must be increased and made available in all areas

All of the other Manifesto priorities are important too

What does it mean to make dementia a national priority? We have as an organisation laid out very clearly in our Manifesto just what it means and most of what we say is endorsed by the new Dementia Epidemic Report so we have sound facts and figures to use

LH: Public awareness of dementia must be increased

Many people know of someone with a diagnosis of dementia but too often they only see the negatives

Scotland as a whole must accept that people live with dementia – often for many years.

We all have a part to play in ensuring that they can continue to have a good quality of life for as long as possible

We would like to see the Scottish Executive funding an awareness campaign about dementia like the “See Me” campaign on mental health

CMcG: We can't do justice to all the priorities in 15 minutes

The Scottish National Party made a commitment in its Manifesto to making dementia a national priority

We must use the Dementia Manifesto to kick start a debate with MSPs and Ministers about how to achieve that

It's about more than money – but please can we have the £15 million now as a token of intent?

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